Sirocco
Open the Doors of Perception

GSW’s Literary and Visual Arts Magazine
A magazine of the arts, Sirocco is published in April of each year by students of Georgia Southwestern State University. GSW is a senior unit of the University System of Georgia and an affirmative action/equal opportunity institution. Opinions expressed in the magazine are neither those of the editors nor those of the University.

Submissions are welcome anytime but cannot be read or acted upon except during January and February. Submissions must not have been previously published and must be submitted in electronic format. Authors and artists should have some present or past affiliation with Georgia Southwestern State University. No work will be returned.

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Editor's Note

“If the doors of perception were cleansed everything would appear to man as it is, infinite.”

The Sirocco staff found inspiration for this year’s theme in William Blake’s The Marriage of Heaven and Hell. While Blake has been inspiration for countless artists, we felt he is especially appropriate as his works fuse the literary and visual arts, which is our aim. Sirocco brings together the literary pieces, musical selections, and visual and dramatic arts from the students, faculty, staff, and alumni of the GSW community. What they all have in common is the fact that art, in all its forms, is based on the individual’s perception of it—whether we like it or not, what it means, and how it makes us feel, depends on the personal lens with which we view it. Blake also challenges his readers’ imagination and dares us to see the world around us, and therefore inspiration, as infinite. If we only make art about what we think art should be about, or what it has been about in the past, we miss the whole point of creating it. Our goal is to represent as many different ideas as possible in several media in hopes to challenge the way the viewer, reader, and listener perceives the world around them. This would not be possible without the hard work from faculty and students in several departments across campus. I would like to specifically thank Dr. Genie Bryan, our faculty advisor, Dr. Mark Laughlin, our music faculty advisor, Ray Mannila and Dr. Stephanie Harvey for their assistance with the Theater Arts section, and the staff: Brittney Musser, Angel Medina, Bill Schmidt, Elisa Boswell, and especially our Art Editor Sunni Zemblowski. Last, but not least, thank you to everyone who submitted their art this year for challenging all of us to open our doors of perception; this magazine would not be possible without you.

Elizabeth McDermott
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The Sirocco Staff

From left to right starting at the top: Sunni Zemblowski, Elizabeth McDermott, Elisa Boswell, Angel Medina, and Brittney Musser

Not picture: Bill Schmidt

Disclaimer: Grammar and proofreading are the sole responsibilities of the authors.
Angel in the Sky
Etrat Fathi
Photograph

Deadly Temptation
Stephanie Harvey
Photograph
**Embodied Vessel**
Ashley Bell
Casted Glass

**Saint George**
Elisa Boswell
Intaglio Print and Watercolor
A Moment of Peace
Devon Kester
Oil on Canvas

Carhenge
Scott Wilkerson
Oil on Canvas
**Metamorphosis**

Rebecca Shields  
Mixed Media on Canvas

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**Thiania bhamoensis**

Sunni Zemblowski  
Oil on Canvas
Standing on the edge of a poetic precipice
With the words I need on the tip of my tongue
Against my teeth
My lips
Falter
Peering down into an abyss
Of half-remembered dreams
And thoughts just out of reach
Searching endlessly
For that flash of inspiration
Heat lightning in my August sky
Storms of clouded brilliance that yield no rain

Go on and rattle me, Fate. Shove a sleek steel rod into my back, a temp for when my spine’s on sick leave, and make me dance around, a puppet waltzing to the tune of free will, pretending I have some control, that life’s a poor and predictable arcade cabinet, that all it would take would be a casual spin of the dull, off-white trackball to send my score into the stratosphere.

Go on and try it, Fate. Suspend my lips from your fingers with cosmic piano wire and make them awkwardly utter a set of syllables so stubborn, so stiff that, right next to them, even statues look like spunky aerobic instructors.

Go on, Fate. Throw your hand in front of me, all cards up. Use the game of chance to show that chance is an illusion, that all those subtly smiling spades are relishing my fall from intellectual grace, watching with diamond gaze my horror and my absurd fascination with the idea that maybe, just maybe, I can’t make a full house on my own. Maybe I need a pinch of stardust resting on the tips of my betting fingers to truly win. Maybe I need to meet a miracle every once in a while.

Go on. Introduce yourself as Fate with a firm and seemingly friendly handshake, but know that, to me, your business card reads “COINCIDENCE” in letters as loud and bold as that tacky tie.
Pretty girl with the long red hair
She stares at the mirror with hatred and glare
She hates her life
But no one cares
Her eyes are so damn rare.

Pretty girl with the long red hair
She pops pills because she doesn’t care
She reapplys her makeup for all the lies
For all the tears she sheds inside,
She cries.

Pretty girl with the long red hair
She likes to smoke because she likes the challenge
Counting her cigarettes is the only thing she can manage
Her heart is so broken
She considers herself damaged.

Pretty girl with the long red hair
She smiles and laughs because she is high
She always told me she wanted to fly
Up in the sky where she can’t look, that all the people around her are using her for her looks.

Pretty girl with the long red hair
She looks like a ghost but she doesn’t care
She looks like a ghost but nobody knows about the pain she feels inside of whom she loves the most.

Pretty girl with the long red hair
She keeps all her beauty and talent inside
It’s her body that no man can deny
She just doesn’t get that her body is hers
She doesn’t realize how much she is worth.

Pretty girl with the long red hair
I’m sorry I never got to tell you that I always cared
I heard from the cops that you overdosed
Out of all the people that I have known, I will miss you the most
You were so beautiful and so alive
I wish I could have told you all my feelings inside.

Pretty girl with the long red hair
I stare at the mirror, and I see you there
You hated your life
But now I care
Your eyes are still damn rare.
**Safety Net**
Angelica Medina

My life is like a circus  
I’m on the tightrope  
With the crowd hissing underneath me  
I’ve just got to swallow my fear  
Close my eyes and cross  
For if I fall  
I know someone will catch me  
Lack of sleep  
The days just go on  
Feeling dizzy, getting spiny  
But I’ve got to relax  
And go on with life  
For if I fall  
I know someone will catch me  
I’m so tired and restless  
Feeling useless  
But I’ve got people who need me here  
So I’ve just got to swallow my fear  
Close my eyes and cross  
For if I fall  
I know someone will catch me

**Sinusaur**
Jeannie Hartley

The poor Sinusaur  
Has a really loud snore  
Which many think’s a roar  
So they run out the door!  
He’s left all alone,  
So he’s always at home.  
And he waits by the phone  
With a sniffle and moan.  
The poor Sinusaur  
Is really not a bore  
He’s made a friend,  
Gerome, who’s a garden gnome.  
Gerome is always there  
Though the people run away  
And with his little happy stare  
Gerome always wants to play.  
The gnome doesn’t sneeze,  
Doesn’t cough, doesn’t snore,  
And he’s happy to stay  
With the nice Sinusaur.
Dinner Party
Tonia Hughes
Photograph

The Fragile Choice
Devon Kester
Mixed Media and Glass
**Pink Dawn**  
Svilen Kostov  
Acrylic on Canvas Board  

**Self-Portrait**  
Svilen Kostov  
Acrylic on Canvas
Katie stared at the clock as she sat in class kicking her feet on the desk in front of her. She was remembering skipping and jumping in puddles on her way to school this morning. She imagined how she would jump into big puddles on the way home, and watch the waves of water splash out just like they had this morning. The bell finally rang and she shoved her books into her desk.

Sitting on the seat in her cubby she smelled the newness of her galoshes. She wanted to shove her face in the foot holes just as she had when she brought them home from the store and again this morning when she took them out of the box. She kicked off her ballet flats and threw them deep into her school bag. She shoved her feet into the wide deep mouth of the galoshes, and wiggled her toes in the comfortable protected space. She then threw on her raincoat and tossed her bag over her shoulder, and ran outside.

She loved the way they hugged her calves. The way the tops of them played with the hem of her skirt. She loved the clomping sound they made on concrete, and the way the tread gripped the ground. But most of all, she loved the colors. The pure gleaming white emblazoned with bright magenta, lime, lemon, cobalt, and mandarin polka-dots. The polka-dots made her think of gum balls, but ones that never lost their flavor.

Most days she talked with Susie and April on the way home, but today she walked ahead of the group to give herself more time at each puddle before they caught up. It had rained more during school, and the puddles were deeper. She could land on one end of a puddle and watch the ripples run across the surface and crash like waves on the beach at the other end. Sometimes the puddles were so deep the splashes reached the fringe of her skirt, but all the while her feet stayed warm and dry.

As Katie played she soon realized all the water around her made the water within her want to flow. It was just like every night after dinner when she put the dishes into the sink. If her hand touched the warm water she found herself running to the bathroom. And right now she realized that was what she needed to do. She could see the apartment she lived in, and thankfully her family lived on the ground floor. All that stood between her and relief was the rest of the block and the crosswalk across 2nd Avenue.

She picked up her pace. She left her friends behind and hoped she could catch the crosswalk at the right time. As always she got to the crosswalk just as the hand was flashing. Knowing how quickly the light changed she waited. Her galoshes were planted on the edge of the curb. The white polka-dotted rubber stood out over the dingy yellow of the painted curb. She rocked on her feet, her knees dancing forward and backward. She clenched her fists inside the pockets of her magenta rain coat.

Then suddenly she stopped moving. The traffic also stopped and the light changed, but she just stood there. A lady with a stroller came straight at her from across the street, but the lady had to shift to get around Katie. Katie stared straight ahead. She saw the hand flash again. Her eyes swelled with gleaming tears that flowed warmly down her cheeks and dripped onto her rain coat. Her clothing wouldn’t get wet from the tears because the tears were on the outside. No, her clothing got wet from the inside, and at that moment the source had stopped its flow leaving her leggings soaked and the bottom of her galoshes full.

Her friends caught up to her. She hoped they wouldn’t notice the tears on her face now flushed as bright as her gleaming raincoat. Just as Susie started to say something, the light changed, and Katie ran across the street. Her toes squished in the puddles inside her new galoshes.
Blue Lotus
Amy Wise

Blue water lily growing along the Nile,
A symbol in hieroglyphics etched on tile.
Gathering meant rowing through the reeds,
A small task for a flower of many needs.
In ancient Egypt, it was a symbol of life,
Sacred to Pharaohs for triumph and strife.
The lotus would rise with morning light
Follow the sun and close at night.
Essence was extracted with a careful hand -
Released fragrance drifted across the land.
Caravans of merchants traveled many miles,
With blue petals from the lotus of the Nile.

I Fell for a Tree
Jeannie Hartley

To some it may be
Nothing more than a fallen tree.
But it’s so much more to me
Than a simple fallen tree.
To me, it’s a fighter ship
Out on the stormy sea.
It’s a big house
With lots of stairs for me.
It’s an airplane
High up in the sky!
But it’s not just that either
To me. It’s more than a tree.
Sometimes it’s a hiding place
That’s just for me.
A place where only I can go
And nobody knows but me.
Sometimes it’s a big bridge
With a canyon far below,
And you can’t fall off!
‘Cause that’s a long way to go!
Then again
Some people see just a tree.
But I see a tree
That’s fallen just for me!
Don’t give credence to my parlance of world travel!

Gabriele Stauf

I sound like a rolling stone, a bona fide “Map for Saturday” nomad. Confidentially, tucked under the roof of a bungalow deserving the appellation – “Enthusiasm,” surrounded by original art, book-lined walls, and Nürnberger Lebkuchen chests full of memorabilia, I must own up: there’re far too many signs of tethers.

I don’t need Janis Joplin’s freedom. I know what I have to lose, and under the Butterfly Bush that’s had a blooming run longer than most Broadway hits, the rocks bordering the bed of irises are gathering the proverbial moss; moss is not the only affidavit against my rover bravado; every plant in my garden entrains my sight to find its species in far flung zones:

Sun-dapples on the rainforest floor shimmer fancifully on begonias; grape clusters encumbering the vines in the Xingfu Temple make me begrudge squirrels making off with my muscadines; figs at Zeus’ well in Olympia nudge thoughts of Brown Turkey nubs dangling in syrupy opulence; in the gardens of Shang Lake day lily and iris succumb to poetic nomenclature – Wong Yu “Forgetting Worries” and Tze Hu-tieh “Dancing Spirit of Summer.”

Enchanted, yes; yet, rooted mid pine and peanuts. The canvas duffle slung over my shoulder will tumble up baggage handlers, absorb high altitude condensation in the belly of a plane vaulting the pole, rip a few more snags as I schlep it across the airport footbridge to hail a taxi. Soon enough, this duffle will hollow out, cave in, and cram into to its cubby while I, divested of itineraries, slouch into the easy chair I share with the cat.

Frequent flyer miles, yes; but only for round trip tickets! After the draw of horizons and wonders, new versions of my name, it’s familiar lilts and cadences, the landscape I’ve built, sidewalk happenstances, a neighbor’s tug on the bell-cord that are the prized rainbow swags trimming the sunrise porch, the red front door. Haven. Here, even in the midst of cares is a sense that the hem of the garment has touched and blessed.

My Wanderlust is tethered by the plants that everywhere hark back to a garden that has its own sense of feng shui. Ponds and bridges, zigzag paths and pavilions are magic elsewhere, but Mr. Elmo’s hand-built steps, Larry’s jasmine-crowned trellis gate, and St. Fiacre invite me with each new season to feel the spell of an estate where every plant is a messenger from the gods.
Inspiration

Bill Schmidt

We find it in the water
And in the rustling of the leaves
Up on the winding road
That brings us to our knees
It comes up out of our spirits
And warms up every thing

Inspiration can come from anywhere
As long as we believe
We can be used to move all people
And light up every sea
There’s beauty, power, and majesty
In everything that we see
It’s everything that you’ve put here
That inspires me

The birds that fly around us
Just hang up in the breeze
The fish that live in the oceans
Fighting their way up a stream
Living as you have made them
Going where they please

Inspiration can come from anywhere
As long as we believe
We can be used to move all people
And light up every sea
There’s beauty, power, and majesty
In everything that we see
It’s everything that you’ve put here
That inspires me

Andersonville

Rossie A. Ross

I work at a place that’s easy to see
Cause it was made into a park by our “democracy”
The reason it’s special is because it used to be
A prison camp for the Confederacy
Before it was famous for how bad it was
It was just earth, water, and woods
But then came the breakdown of the Dix-Hill Cartel
And then the whole thing just went straight to hell
First came the rebels to survey and plan
Then came the black folk to build up the land
After that came the Yankees on train caravan
And not long after that the graveyard claimed its first man
Every day was a tough one out there in the prison
It was there that you made your life’s biggest decision
Do I try and survive in these dreadful conditions
Or do I just snuff it to a head to bullet collision
Some people believed in the U S of A
They said it’s cool they’ll come save me one day
So they waited and waited till they wasted away
Now to this day near 13,000 still wait to be saved
Only now they wait under red Georgia clay
Intimidation
Rebecca Shields
Oil on Canvas

Untitled
Justin Hodges
Mixed Media
If you’re casting for a movie, TV show, public service announcement, or play and need someone to play a corpse, I’m your girl. I can hold any position for any length of time. Draped over a piece of furniture? No problem. Lying in the snow? Can do. Face down in the water? Bring it on. I’m the best corpse actor around.

Of course, it helps that I’m already dead.

I don’t like to dwell on the events that led to my current circumstances. Basically, my death involved a broken carbon monoxide detector at a ski lodge. I was pissed when I “woke up” and realized I was dead. The only person less thrilled was the morgue attendant, and “less thrilled” is an understatement in his case.

Being an Undead American is complicated. For one, I don’t know how long I have before I rot. Realistically, I could look in the mirror tomorrow and be missing an ear. No one knows how much time I have left, because my situation is so unusual. Also, I’m always afraid I smell bad. I can only smell living things – and for the record, living people smell like meat. Maybe that’s why movie zombies always want to eat people.

One of my first problems was earning a living. On TV shows and movies, zombies keep busy as brain-munchers or soul collectors, but in modern life these opportunities are rare and don’t pay well – and besides, I’m a vegetarian, so I don’t want to eat anyone’s brains. I’m also not well-equipped for many jobs. I’m slow-moving and need to lie down a lot, I have limited people skills, and I’m kind of grayish, which scares people.

After I left the morgue – relax, I had everyone’s approval – I went to my mom’s house in Sacramento. That didn’t last long, because I made her nervous, and then she made me nervous, which made her more nervous, and things weren’t going well. Finally my brother said I could crash with him in Hollywood. And it was there that I found my calling.

One evening Eddie and I were watching Criminal Minds when the camera zoomed in on a dead businessman.

“Hey, he moved!” I shouted.

“No kidding?” said Eddie. He rewound the DVD.

“Look at his left hand,” I said. We watched, and sure enough the actor’s thumb twitched.

“Huh,” said Eddie. “Kinda ruins it.”

“I could do better than that,” I complained.

“You’ve got an unfair advantage.”

“Ha ha,” I said, punching him on the arm. Eddie and I looked at each other.

“I could do better than that,” I said.

“Yes, you could.”

The next day, we started searching casting calls. It took several weeks, but eventually we found an ad for someone to play a dead sorority girl in Eli Roth’s new movie. Eddie drove me to the casting call, and I hung around for several hours until a guy with a clipboard appeared. “Dead co-ed?” he asked. About twenty of us raised our hands. “Follow me.” We trooped into a room where three people sat at a table. Disappointingly, Eli Roth wasn’t there.

“You want us to scream?” asked a redhead in a tube top. Without waiting, she took a deep breath. It seemed for a moment that her breasts were going to spring out of the tube top.

“No. Your character’s dead. Get out,” said a man in a green sweatshirt. The redhead exhaled, gave him the finger, and stomped out.

“Lose the girls with the makeup,” said a woman with short blond dreadlocks. Six girls in zombie makeup trudged out. The dreadlocked woman pointed at me. “You too.”

“I’m not wearing makeup,” I said.

She looked at the guy with the clipboard. “Seth?” Seth looked closely at me. “Lisa, she’s not wearing makeup.”

Lisa got up and approached me. She put her face very close to mine and tilted her head thoughtfully. She rubbed my cheek, drawing back with a start and then she felt how cold I was. “I’ll be damned,” she said softly. “You’re for real.”

And that was how it started. Being “Dead Girl #1” in Horrority got my foot in the door, and from that I was able to hire an agent and get more jobs. I’ve been on CSI, NCIS, and even some shows without acronyms in their titles. I’ve been in several movies, most of them horror, but I did play Al Pacino’s daughter in a film that got nominated for a Golden Globe for Best Screenplay. I’ve got my SAG card and a Facebook fan page, maintained by a guy in Tampa who sends me a Christmas card every year.

Becoming a corpse actor is my personal example of overcoming adversity. “When death hands you lemons, make lemonade” is my motto. My agent Gillian says that when casting directors know I’m coming to an audition, they send everyone else home. I suppose that explains the looks I get from the other actors. I was afraid I smelled bad. I can’t stop worrying about that.

Everything was going well until one day I got turned down for a job. At the risk of sounding like a brat, I hadn’t been rejected before, so this was surprising. Gillian called to break the news. “What happened?” I asked. “Someone else showed up they liked more,” she said. “That’s all I know.”

After that, my luck changed. I was no longer the go-to corpse actor, although I still got plenty of work. I scrutinized the competition at castings, but couldn’t figure out who was showing me up. And then, one day, I arrived on the set of Horrority 4: Senior Year to see crime scene tape across the entrance. Several people were crying, others were standing around whispering or looking nervous.
I thought some of those nervous looks might be directed at me, but I realized I might just be paranoid. I saw my friend Tonya and a few other makeup artists. They were talking in hushed tones, and all but Tonya left when I came over. Even Tonya seemed a little apprehensive.

“What’s up?” I asked. “Is something wrong? Do I smell bad?”

“You smell fine,” said Tonya absently. “Everyone’s acting weird. Did something happen?”

“One of the gaffers was killed last night,” Tonya replied. “Mark. You know him?”

“The short bald guy with the neck tattoos?” I asked.

“Right.”

“That’s terrible,” I said. “I didn’t know him well, but he was always nice.

What happened?”

“Someone tore his throat out,” said Tonya, avoiding my gaze. “Looks like he bled to death.”

I was shocked. “How awful! Did someone call the police?”

“Yeah, they should be coming any minute now. Since it happened on set, they’re probably going to want to talk to everyone. We might not get any shooting done today.”

I felt uneasy. “Tonya,” I said, “is that why people are looking at me funny? Do they think I had something to do with it?”

Tonya sighed. “Look, I didn’t want to mention this, but everyone knows about your ‘condition’ –” she made air quotes – “and some of them think you killed Mark.”

I was crushed. “But I wouldn’t kill anyone! I’m a vegetarian!”

“I believe you. But not everyone will.”

A gofer came over. “No shooting today. Everyone needs to talk to the cops. Stay put until they call you.”

Tonya and I waited. A few of the makeup artists came back over and were pleasant enough, but kept their distance. Finally I was interviewed by a stocky detective who wore nice aftershave. He asked lots of questions about my job history and being undead, which I guess he’d learned about from other people. He asked if I had an alibi, and I told him I’d been grocery shopping. I gave him Eddie’s phone number and the number of the store so he could confirm that. Detective Harris also asked if I would be willing to submit to DNA testing and bite mark analysis and I told him I would. I had figured something like this would happen eventually, and had decided not to worry unless I started being accused of every suspicious death around.

Production was shut down for a couple of days. I stayed busy during the down time. I went to the police station and let them swab my cheek and take an impression of my teeth. I filmed an anti-drug PSA and tried not to worry too much. Finally we got the call to come back. People were nicer to me on the set, and Tonya explained, while painting burn marks on my face, that the police had

called Eli Roth and told him I had been cleared as a suspect. News travels fast in this industry, and it was nice to have things back to what passes for normal on a movie set.

All made up, I was waiting for the electrocution in the hot tub scene when a tall brunette came up and sat next to me. “Looks like we’re in the scene together,” she said.


“Oh, I know who you are,” she said. “I’ve heard a lot about you.”

“That’s nice,” I said uncertainly. Shelly smiled, a triumphant smirk that told me I had good reason not to trust her. “I can understand why you’re threatened,” she said. “I’m your competition.”

“Plenty of roles for dead girls,” I said. “No worries.”

We sat in silence until we were called for the scene. There was something about Shelly that bothered me, apart from her predatory vibe, and I couldn’t identify what it was until we were towelizing off. I realized that normally, hot wet people smelled like pot roast, but she didn’t smell like anything. And the only reason I could think of for that was…

“Seriously?” I said aloud. Shelly looked up and gave me a knowing nod and another smirk before she sauntered off. I felt both angry and threatened, but had to go hang upside down as a stand-in for Dakota Fanning, so I didn’t have time to think about it more.

After that I was called to shoot several episodes of Dexter, playing a victim of a serial killer who saved his body. While waiting for filming to start one day, I overheard two grips talking.

“Couldn’t we get that other dead girl?” one asked. “You know, the one from last season, with the…” He held his hands in front of his chest in a cupping motion.

The other grip winked at me. “Nah. She was a bitch. Remember how she argued with Dahl? You can’t talk to directors like that.”

“Yeah, but…” the first guy held his hands out again.

“Let it go, man. This one’s nicer.” He smiled at me. “Thanks, I mouthed. We both knew dating was impossible, but it was nice to be appreciated. Plus, I had learned something useful. After that, I started paying more attention to set chatter. I never asked about Shelly directly, but I learned that she’d burned a lot of bridges. I started feeling more secure. I got cast as a dead prostitute in a direct-to-cable Hillside Strangler movie, and a typhoid victim in a History Channel documentary to start after the movie wrapped, and I felt like things were once again getting back on track.

But then I arrived at the Strangler set to find out that one of the actors had been murdered, in the same way as the Horrority 4 gaffer. Once again, suspi-
cion fell on me, and I had to have another chat with Detective Harris. Once again I had a good alibi – I had been out for drinks with the other prostitute actresses – but it was still an unpleasant few days for me, plus it was awful to have someone else die like that.

After we wrapped things up on the Strangler film, I started the History Channel shoot. The same thing happened. One of the gofers was murdered, his throat and chest torn out, and again I was the prime suspect. This time I didn’t have a good alibi – I had been watching TV at home alone – so there was a lot more investigating involved.

“How do you explain all this?” asked Detective Harris.

“I can’t,” I admitted.

I called Gillian and filled her in. “This is terrible,” she said. “You don’t want to get blacklisted for being a murderer.”

“I’m not,” I protested.

“Doesn’t matter. If people think trouble follows you around, no one will hire you. You need to fix this, fast.” She hung up.

I was really upset. Someone was killing people – nice people, innocent people – and I was getting the blame. I needed work, and I didn’t want any more people to die. Fortunately, or perhaps not, I had plenty of time to figure something out. I knew there was something important I was missing, something really obvious, but I wasn’t sure what it was.

And then I saw it.

Once again it started with Criminal Minds, a new episode this time. I briefly glanced away from the screen, and when I looked back there was Shelly, being zipped into a body bag.

“That’s it!” I shouted. Eddie glanced at me warily. “You okay?” he asked.

I explained everything. I felt like an idiot. I had known from the beginning that Shelly was gunning for me, and now I realized what she was doing. Somehow she was tracking my jobs and killing people on the set, and since everyone knew I was Undead, I would be the natural target of suspicion.

“I’m so dumb,” I moaned. “Why didn’t I see it sooner?”

“You’ve been in horror movies,” Eddie shrugged. “That’s how it works. The heroine’s always the last to know. What I don’t understand is, if the cops think an Undead did this, why haven’t they investigated her?”

“She doesn’t look Undead,” I said. “She wears a lot of makeup.” I sighed.

“This sucks. What now?”

Eddie shrugged again. “Have you tried talking to her?”

“She doesn’t seem like the reasonable type,” I said.

“Try it anyway. Find out what she’s up to. Maybe if you’re nice to her, you can make her feel guilty.”


The next day, I learned Shelly was working on James Wan’s latest project. I staked out the set and waited for her to leave.
I poked Shelly with the laundry rack. Nothing happened. Eddie and I looked closely. Shelly was charred and smoking. I thought back to our first meeting in the hot tub on the movie set and realized what a good makeup artist Tonya was.

I called Detective Harris, and he called lots of other people, and to make an extremely long story short, after days of explaining and many tests it was determined that Shelly had been responsible for the movie set murders, and I was off the hook.

“Figures,” I said. “That’s always how it goes in horror movies.”

“You’re the expert,” said Eddie.

I felt better than I had in a long time, even though my right ring and pinky fingers seemed to be permanently sticking out at a ninety-degree angle from the rest of my hand. Oh, well, I thought. Lemonade. Think of the lemonade.

The phone rang. It was Gillian, calling to tell me about a job. Like I said, news travels fast in the entertainment industry.

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**The Dance**

*Adrian Hollomon*

There’s no reason to fight you
Your embrace is welcoming
Calming, soothing, numbing
You’ve come earlier than expected
And come alone and unhinged
Your hand is freezing cold
But it’s strangely comforting
I accept it most graciously
Leading to a fitting end
Why thank you, I’d love to dance.
Planned Obsolescence #14
Scott Wilkerson
Oil on Canvas

Choices?
Devon Kester
Oil on Canvas
Sus scrofa
Suni Zemblowski
Oil on Canvas

Sky
Stephanie Harvey
Photograph
**Catch-22**

NediaIa Iordanova

How can people get to know each other
When they don't send paper letters anymore?
How can people learn to trust each other
When they don't share a meal together?
How can people learn to be caring for others
When they don't have time to say goodnight?
How can people remember the smell of a newborn love
When they drink their coffee alone?
How can people feel a fast beating heart
When they live thousands of worlds away?
This fast, digital world is so convenient but
How long can we survive lonely and sane?
It is easy to get caught up in a solitary life,
That we so often forget to make the effort,
To remember that we are humans.

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**Dam of Resentment**

Katie Lea

As soon as the first thoughts
of forgiveness
are whispered inside
the poison begins to drain
from my mind.
Like excess water from a dam,
apologies pump out a rush of toxins
Now that the bitterness has been dredged out,
once again, my heart rests.
The Crystal Vase
Donghong Meng

I was a crystal vase in the very beginning, patternless and colorless, pure, simple and natural. And I have no sense, no desire, and no thought.

But after I came into the world, year by year, fine cracks have crawled on me. They segmented me into numerous compartments in which varied colors gradually filled, and finally I was changed.

Now people say, “What a beautiful cloisonné vase!” “Rich colors!” “Detailed lifelike wire patterning!” But nobody knows how much I miss the days when I was a crystal vase.

Six Years
Angelica Medina

You’re living in reality, while I’m in a fantasy. You’re dreams came true, and mine are still thoughts. In reality, I’m one of millions, but in fantasy, you’re my one in a million. In life we could never be, but in dream, you’re not a mystery. I can see you and you can see me in a world of make believe.

Life strikes your chords as I vanish in a sea of faces. You’ll keep moving on and I’ll stay in my place. Away from my grasp, but fixated in my head. Unable to hold, unless it’s in my sleep. You’re living in the world physically, but only in mine mentally, where we can never truly be.
Hottentotta judaicus  
Sunni Zemblowski  
Oil on Canvas

Car Goblets  
Scott Wilkerson  
Sand Casted Glass with Aluminum
**Nunsense**

A co-production of The Sumter Players & GSW Theatre Arts Department
March 31 - April 3, 2011
A Midsummer Night's Dream
GSW Theatre Arts Department Production
April 28 - May 1, 2011

Cast
Blaire Erskine
Nick Ryan
Marc Weathersby
Emily Weber
Ashley Longacre
Christin Woods
Amanda Cook
Kat Harshbarger
Drew Brownlee
Nathan McGrady
Eric Holt
Mario Pagan
Jeremy Ellenberg
Daina Rosario
Will Dozier
Mark Culpepper
Becky Holder
Sterlyn McCoullough
Sara Thompson
William Searcy
Sidney Davis

Crew
Director
Asst. Director
Stage Manager
Asst. Stage Manager
Technical Director
Set Design
Costume &
Make-up Design
Properties Design
Lighting Design
Light Operator
Sound Design
Sound Operator

Jeffrey Green
Bekah Martens
Shatora Smith
Brittany Bush
Ray Mannila
Lane Marchant
Ashley Longacre
THEA 3020
Ray Mannila & Nick Ryan
Jeremy Ellenberg
Jeffery Green
Dennis Proulx & Quintin Sims
The Importance of Being Earnest

Sirocco Theatre Arts

Sumter Players Production

May 12 - 15, 2011

Cast
Marcus Weathersby
Will Dozier
Sidney Davis
Michelle Andrews
Lisa Hacker
Sara Elizabeth Thompson
Ellen Cotter
Derrick Bryant

Crew
Director
Irmgard Schopen-Davis
Asst. Director
Megan Sleeth
Stage Manager
Megan Sleeth
Asst. Stage Manager
Mark Culpepper
Production Manager
Mark Culpepper
Technical Director
Ray Mannila
Set Design & Lighting Design
Lane Marchant
Costume Design
Sharon Parks, Irmgard Schopen-Davis, & Lisa Hacker
Properties Design
Sharon Parks, Irmgard Schopen-Davis, & Ellen Cotter
Sound Design
Irmgard Schopen-Davis

The Importance of Being Earnest

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Cast
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Ellen Cotter
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Irmgard Schopen-Davis
Asst. Director
Megan Sleeth
Stage Manager
Megan Sleeth
Asst. Stage Manager
Mark Culpepper
Production Manager
Mark Culpepper
Technical Director
Ray Mannila
Set Design & Lighting Design
Lane Marchant
Costume Design
Sharon Parks, Irmgard Schopen-Davis, & Lisa Hacker
Properties Design
Sharon Parks, Irmgard Schopen-Davis, & Ellen Cotter
Sound Design
Irmgard Schopen-Davis

Crimes of the Heart

A co-production of The Sumter Players & GSW Theatre Arts Department

Sept. 8 - 11, 2011

Cast
Lisa Hacker
Tami Colter
William Searcy
Amanda Cook
Natasha Wood
Marcus Weathersby

Crew
Director
Rebekah Martens
Asst. Director
Jennifer O’Rourke
Stage Manager
Jennifer O’Rourke
Technical Director
Ray Mannila
Set Design
Ray Mannila
Costumes
Sharon Parks & Ashley Longacre
Properties
Sharon Parks & Ashley Longacre
Lighting Design
Ray Mannila
Light Operator
Wayndaysha Stonbury
Sound Operator
Shianne Simpson
Cast
Megan Sleeth
Amanda Cook
Sara Thompson
Christin Woods
Ashley Longacre
Daina Rosario
Mark Culpepper
Jeremy Ellenberg
Daniel Holt
Mario Pagan
Richard Thornton
Jesse Wade

Crew
Director           Jeffrey Green
Stage Manager            Brooke Echols
Asst. Stage Managers Shatora Smith & Hannah Ruiz
Technical Director Ray Mannila
Set Design Ray Mannila
Costumes Ray Mannila, Melanie Parry, & Ashley Longacre
Properties Design Ray Mannila & Brooke Echols
Properties Mistress Shatora Smith
Lighting Design Lane Marchant
Light Board Operator Lane Marchant
Sound Operators Zach Lewis, Brandon Loper, & Libby Unfricht
Sound Design Jeff Green
Blithe Spirit

A co-production of The Sumter Players & GSW Theatre Arts Department
Nov. 17-20, 2011

Cast
Sara Thompson
Rebekah Martens
Jason Wallace
Will Dozier
Megan Sleeth
Genie Bryan
Christin Woods

Crew
Director    William C. Searcy
Stage Manager  Hannah Ruiz
Technical Director  Eric Holt
Scenic Design  Mark Culpepper
Costumes  Sharon Parks
Properties Design  Ashley Longacre
Properties Mistress  Kristine Pair
Lighting Design  Jeremy Ellenberg
Lighting Operation  Jeremy Ellenberg
Sound Engineer  Jesse Wade
Board Operator  Jesse Wade

Blithe Spirit

A co-production of The Sumter Players & GSW Theatre Arts Department
Nov. 17-20, 2011
The 2012 edition of Sirocco is dedicated to Dr. Shirley Litwhiler, a professor of English at GSW from 1968 until her retirement in 1999. While working as a full time faculty member, she finished her Ph.D. at Auburn University, specializing in Southern Literature, and raised three children. Among her many roles and contributions to the arts at GSW, Dr. Litwhiler served as faculty advisor for Sirocco for two years. Her inspiration began in her classes and extended to the literary magazine as well as to a host of other creative outlets such that the effects are incalculable.

Dr. Litwhiler’s service to the arts and cultural life extended into the local community, especially in her involvement with the Sumter Players. Not only did she serve on the Board of Directors for many years, including President, but she also acted on stage in many roles. Her portrayal of Adelaide in Guys and Dolls won Best Actress award for the year, and she also garnered Best Supporting Actress Awards for roles in The Foreigner and Lalume. Not only did she serve on the advisory board and give award winning performances, Dr. Litwhiler also directed several performances in her long association with Sumter Players.

Since her retirement, she has spent much of her time traveling the world, enjoying her children and grandchildren, and inspiring those of us fortunate enough to wander into her sphere. Dr. Litwhiler’s warmth, good humor, and love for literature and the arts are contagious to anyone fortunate enough to spend time with her. Her next adventure will take her to South Africa, and I eagerly await the occasion when she regales us about this experience with her great charm and wit.

Sirocco Mission Statement

At Sirocco, we strive to provide our community an outlet for the unique voices we encounter everyday and to share our contributor’s personal expressions in order to enrich our environment. Through the years, we have witnessed the rising awareness of the arts and hope to further that cause. Our goal is to encourage new voices, reinforce the creative process, and create opportunities for the winds of creativity to sweep through our community.

A Brief History

From 1965 – 1983, twelve editions of Sirocco were published as a literary magazine. The founding Faculty Advisor was Mrs. Iris Argo. In 1984, the magazine’s name was changed to Clay and Pine: A Magazine of Literary and Visual Art and continued under that name until 2004. In 1985, Clay and Pine was the winner of the College Literary Magazine National Competition. In 2004, the editors wanted to return to the original name as it was more in keeping with the themes of Georgia Southwestern’s nickname – the Hurricanes. To augment the name, the subtitle “Catching the Winds of Creativity” was added. In 2010, Sirocco expanded the artistic media it encompassed and added a musical accompaniment with the help of Dr. Mark Laughlin, the Music Faculty Advisor.
Literary and Visual Arts Awards

The Dolores Capitan Writing Award
Is made possible through the generous support of Dr. And Mrs. William Capitan, and is given yearly to nonfiction writers who are students at Georgia Southwestern State University. The winners are chosen by faculty judges.

2012 Academic Division Winners:
1st place: Breanna Klewitz’s “Let’s Talk about Sex: Instincts, Impulses, and D.H. Lawrence”
2nd place: Elizabeth McDermott’s “Mothers and Monsters: Revisions in the 1831 Edition of Frankenstein”
3rd place: Jasmine Sims’s “Communicative Abilities of Animals: A Language Study of Apes, Birds, and Dogs.”

2012 Creative Division Winners:
2nd place: Ryan Roney’s “Galoshes”

Editor’s Choice
This year’s Editor’s Choice prize is sponsored by Technology One. This award is selected by Sirocco’s Literary and Art Editors.
This year’s winner: Ellen Cotter’s “The Corpse Actor”

The Sirocco Cover Prize
This year’s cover art contest is sponsored by Global Graphics. This award is offered each fall by the Sirocco editors, who select a theme and accept submissions for cover art.
This year’s winner: Sunni Zemblowski’s “Portal”

Pat’s Place Poetry Prize
This award, sponsored by Pat’s Place, is given to the best poetry submission. The winner is chosen by the Sirocco staff.
This year’s winner: Lane Marchant’s “Untitled”